

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 311124 TOSEC 340028

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 21613 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
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S E C R E T BONN 21613

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DEPT PLEASE PASS ACTION SECDEF WASHDC AND INFO USNMR
SHAPE AND USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, MASS, NATO, PO, GW, US
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE FORCE MODERNIZATION

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BEGIN SUMMARY: FRG PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE
TO PORTUGUESE FORCE MODERNIZATION HAVE NOW BEEN APPROVED
BY DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER AND ARE BEFORE THE FOREIGN
MINISTER. APPROVAL WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED BY THE
FINANCE MINISTER AND THE CHANCELLOR. FRG DEFENSE
OFFICIALS AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO THE APPROACH SUGGESTED

BY THE US FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER NATO ALLIES, BUT THEY DO NOT BELIEVE SUCH APPROACHES SHOULD BE MADE, OR THAT FRG OFFERS OF SUPPORT CAN BE FIRMED UP, BEFORE THE PORTUGUESE THEMSELVES HAVE MADE KNOWN THEIR REQUIREMENTS. THE FMOD DOES NOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE THOSE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY. END SUMMARY

1. FRG DEFENSE OFFICIALS SHARE US VIEW OF THE IMPORT-ANCE OF RAPID PROGRESS IN PORTUGUESE FORCE MODERNIZATION AND OF THE NEED FOR ACTIVE SUPPORT FROM OTHER NATO ALLIES. WITH A DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, OF THE STATUS OF PORTUGAL'S OWN PLANNING, GERMAN VIEWS ON THE TIMING AND SEQUENCE OF NEXT STEPS DO NOT YET AGREE WITH OUR OWN.

2. EMBOFF WENT OVER INSTRUCTIONS IN REFTEL A WITH MAJOR GENERAL BRANDT, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF (POL/MIL AFFAIRS), FMOD, ON DEC 27. BRANDT SEEMED UNAWARE OF PLANS FOR A JANUARY MEETING OF THE AD HOC GROUP ON ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL AND QUESTIONED WHETHER SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE ADVISABLE BEFORE THE PORTUGUESE HAD MADE KNOWN THEIR REQUESTS FOR EQUIPMENT. HE DID NOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE THESE REQUESTS BEFORE THE LAST WEEK IN JANUARY AT THE EARLIEST.

3. GENERAL BRANDT RECALLED THAT, WHEN THE US/FRG SURVEY TEAM CHIEFS PRESENTED THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PORTUGUESE IN AUGUST, THEY WERE TOLD THEY WOULD BE INVITED BACK TO LISBON IN OCTOBER TO RECEIVE THE PORTUGUESE REACTIONS. THE OCTOBER MEETING DID NOT TAKE

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PLACE, AND THE GERMANS ARE NOW EXPECTING THE MEETING TO BE HELD AT THE END OF JANUARY. BRANDT SAID HE HAD RECENTLY DISCUSSED THE TIMING QUESTION WITH A PENTAGON COUNTERPART BY PHONE AND THOUGHT THE US WAS ALSO WORKING ON THE SAME TIMEFRAME. HE DID NOT SEE HOW THE ALLIES COULD MAKE SPECIFIC OFFERS OF EQUIPMENT UNTIL THE PORTUGUESE HAD MADE THEIR OWN DESIRES KNOWN.

4. BRANDT ALSO DISCUSSED THE STATUS OF INTERNAL FRG PLANNING, STATING THAT THE GERMANS WERE BEHIND THE US IN PART BECAUSE DISCUSSIONS OF FORMATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT (DEC L4) HAD TAKEN PRIORITY. DEFENSE MINISTRY PROPOSALS HAD, HOWEVER, NOW BEEN THOROUGHLY STAFFED IN THE FMOD AND HAD BEEN APPROVED BY MINISTER LEBER. THESE PROPOSALS HAD BEEN FORWARDED TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, AND HE WAS INFORMED THAT A MEMORANDUM CONTAINING FOREIGN OFFICE STAFF LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS WAS SENT TO FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ON DECEMBER 23. BRANDT SAID GENSCHER

WAS IN BONN AND MIGHT ACT ON THE PROPOSALS AS EARLY AS THIS WEEK.

5. BEFORE AN FRG POSITION CAN BE TAKEN, HOWEVER, IT MUST ALSO BE APPROVED BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND BY THE CHANCELLOR (WHO IS VACATIONING IN SPAIN UNTIL JANUARY 7). BRANDT EXPLAINED THAT THIS HIGH-LEVEL APPROVAL WAS ALL THE MORE NECESSARY BECAUSE THE FRG

HAD NEVER BEFORE PROVIDED ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF ADVISERS AND THAT A SPECIAL POLITICAL DECISION WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR SENDING NOT ONLY EQUIPMENT BUT PERSONNEL.

6. BRANDT CONTINUED THAT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WAS NOT UNTIL JANUARY 25, BUT THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE THREE MINISTERS AND THE CHANCELLOR WOULD DISCUSS THE ISSUE BEFORE THEN ON THE EDGE OF A CABINET MEETING.

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7. BRANDT PREFERRED NOT TO RESPOND TO THE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS IN PARA 5, REFTEL A, UNTIL HE COULD GO OVER THE US PRESENTATION WITH HIS STAFF EXPERTS. ASKED WHETHER THE PROPOSALS APPROVED BY LEBER AND FORWARDED TO GENSCHER INCLUDED PROVISION OF THE 50 TANKS (REF C), BRANDT SAID HE WAS NOT CERTAIN OF THE NUMBER BUT THAT TANKS WERE INCLUDED--BUT ONLY IF THE PORTUGUESE REQUESTED THEM. AS FOR THE US IDEAS ON SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE MADE BY OTHER NATO ALLIES, BRANDT'S PRELIMINARY IMPRESSION WAS THAT THEY SEEMED LIKE GOOD IDEAS BUT THAT ALL OF THEM WOULD HAVE TO BE PRECEDED BY AN "IF"--IF THE GOP ASKED FOR THAT TYPE OF ASSISTANCE.

8. BRANDT STRESSED THAT HE WAS NOT OPPOSED TO A MEETING OF THE AD HOC GROUP, AND HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE DESIRABILITY OF LOBBYING WITH OTHER ALLIES. HE RESERVED JUDGMENT ON TIMING OF SUCH APPROACHES PENDING FULLER STUDY OF THE US PROPOSAL, BUT HOPED TO PROVIDE A FURTHER REACTION IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

9. COMMENT: WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE MORE FORMAL FRG RESPONSE TO OUR PROPOSAL WILL IN LARGE MEASURE BE DEPENDENT ON NEXT STEPS TAKEN BY THE PORTUGUESE THEMSELVES. IF AS EXPECTED BY USNATO (PARA 2, REF B) THE PORTUGUESE RELEASE THEIR REQUEST TO THE ALLIES IN EARLY JANUARY, RATHER THAN WAITING FOR A RETURN VISIT TO LISBON BY THE US/FRG SURVEY TEAM, THIS MAY EXPEDITE GERMAN ACTION. BRANDT INDICATED IN ANY CASE THAT THE STAFF LEVEL WERE URGING THE CABINET

TO REACH EARLY DECISIONS, BUT THE HIGH-LEVEL
CLEARANCES REQUIRED WILL STILL TAKE TIME.
STOESSEL UNQTE ROBINSON

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